Background
The Young Farmers & Ranchers (YF&R) Excellence in Agriculture Award competition is designed as an opportunity for young farmers and ranchers to earn recognition, while actively contributing and growing though their involvement in Farm Bureau and agriculture. Participants will be judged on their involvement in agriculture, leadership ability, and participation/involvement in Farm Bureau and other organizations (i.e., civic, service and community). The ideal candidate(s) for the Excellence in Agriculture Award is an individual or couple who does not have the majority of his/her net income subject to normal production risk. The Minnesota Farm Bureaus will provide, as part of the state recognition and award, an expenses-paid trip to the AFBF Annual Convention held in 2022 in Atlanta, GA, January 7-12, 2022.

COVID-19: If AFBF is unable to hold the 2022 Annual Convention in-person due to COVID-19, the competitive events will be held virtually, and all applicants should be made aware of this possibility prior to their application. If the competition will be virtual, all contestants will be given the opportunity to withdraw their application for 2022 to ensure eligibility for future years.

Information about the Excellence in Agriculture applicant is requested on the entry form. ALL INFORMATION IS HANDLED IN STRICT CONFIDENCE AND IS DESTROYED AFTER JUDGING IS COMPLETED.

Eligibility
• An applicant can be either an individual or a couple that is married or has similar legal rights under the law applicable to the Minnesota Farm Bureau organization. Applicant may choose to apply individually, rather than as a couple.
• Applicant(s) shall be a Farm Bureau member(s) between the ages of 18 and 35 in good standing with his/her county Farm Bureau. The individual or spouse/spousal-equivalent shall have reached his/her 18th birthday at the time he/she qualifies for the national competition and shall not have reached his/her 36th birthday by Jan. 31, 2022.
• Applicant(s) must not have derived a majority of his/her net income from an owned production agriculture enterprise in any of the past three years.
• Applicant(s) may only compete in one national YF&R Competition per year.
• Present members of the MFBF YF&R Committee are not eligible to compete. Past and present members of the AFBF Young Farmers & Ranchers Committee and/or their spouse are not eligible to compete.
• Past Minnesota YF&R Achievement Award winners and/or previous AFBF Achievement Award competitors are not eligible to compete.
• Previous AFBF Excellence in Agriculture Award competitors are not eligible to compete. Past state YF&R Excellence in Agriculture winners are eligible if they have not previously competed at the national level.
• Current employees or agents of county, state and/or the American Farm Bureau organizations and their affiliates are not eligible to compete. An affiliate is defined as an entity owned or controlled in whole or in part by another entity through, for example, ownership (including partial ownership) or positions on the board of directors. Past employees who were responsible for implementing any of the YF&R Competitive Events at the state or national level are ineligible.

Entry Form & Application Guidelines
• Do not use applicant’s name, the name of his/her state or county, or any names that may bring about the recognition or identification of the applicant’s state beyond the entry form. The written versions of the application have a search feature to locate any identifiers. Verbal and presentation reference to applicants’ name, state and county will be allowed during your presentation for personalization of presentation.
• The entry form and application must be completed in first person narrative (i.e. I, me, we, etc.) for questions 1-5. “A1”/“A2” may not be used for questions 1-5. Applicants must use “A1”/“A2” to denote each applicant for all of question 6.
• Do not use abbreviations or acronyms, unless it has been spelled out once with the abbreviation in parentheses behind it. For example, United States Department of Education (USDE). AFBF, FB, and YF&R are acceptable to use throughout the application.
• Your County Farm Bureau & the Minnesota Farm Bureaus have permission to reproduce the attached entry form for state-level competition or as a recruitment tool.
• It will be up to the judges’ discretion to deduct points if applicants include activities before they were 18.

Note: Disregard of the guidelines will result in disqualification of the application.
Presentation Guidelines

- The presentation will be an interactive, 25-minute presentation, in which the applicant(s) has an opportunity to share the contents of his/her/their entire application in narrative form with a panel of three judges and the audience.
  - Applicant(s) will have 25 minutes to present on the topics addressed in the application and address questions from the judges. Applicants will be notified by the timekeeper when 10 minutes are remaining and again when five (5) minutes are remaining. Each judge will be prepared to ask at least one question. Time will be called and conclude the applicant's time in front of the judges at 25 minutes. It will be up to the applicant(s) to determine how they use this time.
- The only visual means in which to deliver the information is through a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation. The applicant(s) needs to submit their presentation on a USB flash drive during the Excellence in Agriculture Competitor Orientation. A computer, LCD projector, screen and one slide advance remote will be provided. All presentations must be formatted to work on a PC. Contestants will not be allowed to use their own computer.
- Verbal and presentation references to applicant(s) name, state and county will be allowed during the presentation.
- No props (including notes), sound or video of any kind will be allowed during the presentation.
- Applicants are not allowed to view other presentations until after they have completed their own.

Judging

- All applications will be judged prior to the AFBF Annual Convention. Applicants will present to a different set of judges at the Annual Convention.

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<tr>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Approx. %</th>
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<tr>
<td>Questions 2-4</td>
<td>180 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Ag Involvement, Impact on Ag and Issues Facing Ag</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>40 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farm Bureau Experience</td>
<td>90 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Leadership Experience</td>
<td>80 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Form</td>
<td>10 points</td>
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**MAXIMUM POINTS**

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<th>400 points</th>
<th>100%</th>
<th>(80% of Total Score)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Delivery of Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Content of Presentation</td>
<td>40 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses to Questions</td>
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<td>30%</td>
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**MAXIMUM POINTS**

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Deadline

The Minnesota Farm Bureau entry form and application must be received via email or regular mail no later than 12:00 Midnight on September 15, 2021.

State Awards:

- **1st Place Prize** -- $500 Check, **2nd Place Prize** - $250 Check
- **American Farm Bureau Convention** – The MFBF Excellence in Ag Award Winner and spouse, spousal equivalent will be awarded transportation, lodging, and registration costs necessary to compete in the American Farm Bureau Federation Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture competition and participating in the recognition and awards program at the AFBF Annual Convention held in 2022 in Atlanta, GA.
- **Farmers to Washington D.C. Trip** – The finalists will have the opportunity to take part in the 2022 MFBF Farmers to Washington D.C. Trip. A fee of $150 per finalist will be charged to the individuals. It will include round trip airfare, lodging, while in Washington D.C., and some meals. The participant will meet with their Congressional delegation, top governmental officials and the American Farm Bureau Federation government affairs staff. Counties will also pay a matching $150. Spouse/spousal-equivalent is welcome to participate on their own expense (less hotel).
- **MFBF Leadership Conference** – The winner of the MFBF Excellence in Ag Award competition and their spouse/spousal equivalent will receive a complimentary registration and hotel room at the 2021 MFBF Leadership Conference.

Advancement Option

The Minnesota Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee announced in 2017 a program to help grown our competitive contests and allow those interested to grow their operations and build their leadership skills by announcing an Advancement Option.

**How it works:**

The Advancement Option allows you to be a part of the competitive process of the contests without the “competitiveness”. Potential applicants compete and are judged to learn about how you can grow their farming operations and grown in their own personal development.

You are judged but NOT ranked like the other full competitors of the contests and therefore you are ineligible to advance onto national competition. This allows you to come back and compete in the contest in future years.

**Guidelines:**

You must agree to this option prior to the competition. You must circle this option on your signature page.
Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation
Young Farmers & Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award

2021-2022 Entry Form

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The Minnesota Farm Bureau entry form and the application must be received via email or regular mail no later than 12:00 Midnight on September 15, 2021.

The data below and throughout the application applies to you and your spouse/spousal-equivalent, if married. Please indicate “Applicant 1” (A1) and “Applicant 2” (A2) when responding to question 6.

Applicant(s)*: A1 _______________________________ A2 _______________________________
* Will be used in the program and for recognition

Phonetic Pronunciation: ____________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: ______________________ State: __________ Zip Code: ________________

Phone: ____________________________

Email: A1 ___________________________ A2 ___________________________

Date of Birth: A1 ___________________________ A2 ___________________________

Education/Degree: A1 ___________________________ A2 ___________________________

Short Courses/Specialized Study: A1 ___________________________ A2 ___________________________

Please provide one of the following for verification purposes – upload to the application site:

- Copy of Form 1099 or Form W-2
- A letter of verification from your employer or company on letterhead that includes length of employment and a brief description of your job responsibilities

I (we) hereby certify the information on this entry form and attached application to be accurate and true statements. MFBF DOES NOT ACCEPT LIABILITY FOR APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED INCORRECTLY BY A COUNTY FARM BUREAU OFFICE. MFBF reserves the right to use my (our) photos and/or any video footage for use in promoting Farm Bureau. The photos and/or video footage of the undersigned contestant(s) may also be available to Farm Bureau sponsors. I (we) have not derived a majority of my (our) income from an owned production agricultural enterprise in any of the past three years. By participating in the Event, I (we) warrant that I (we) fully and unconditionally agree to and accept the YF&R official contest rules and the decisions of the MFBF YF&R Committee, which are final and binding.

I/We would like to take advantage of the Advancement Option (Please circle): Yes No

COVID-19

If AFBF is unable to hold the 2022 Annual Convention in-person due to COVID-19, the competitive events will be held virtually. In the event of virtual competitions, changes in timing and format of the competitions are likely to be required. For example, some portions of the competition may take place prior to the virtual convention. Applicants will be advised as soon as possible after the decision is made. If the competitions will be virtual, all contestants will be given the opportunity to withdraw their applications for 2022 to ensure eligibility for future years.

Applicant(s) Signature(s): A1 _______________________________ A2 _______________________________

I hereby certify that the above-named applicant(s) is the official entry and is therefore eligible to be entered in and considered for AFBF Young Farmers and Ranchers Excellence in Agriculture Award for 2022. WE agree that the County will also pay a matching $150 for the winner/winning couple for the 2022 Washington D.C. Trip.

County President: ________________________________ Date: ________________

County: ___________________________________________
Note: Remember to write in first person narrative (i.e., I, me, we, etc.) for questions 1-5. Remember no state-specific identifiers.

1. PERSONAL BACKGROUND (family, education and personal interests) – Approximately 2,000 characters

2. AGRICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT – Approximately 2,500 characters
   A. Please explain the applicant(s) occupation.
2. AGRICULTURAL INVOLVEMENT (continued) - *Approximately 2,500 characters*

B. Please explain the applicant(s) personal involvement in agriculture/agribusiness.
3. IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE - *Approximately 5,000 characters*

Clearly describe the efforts the applicant(s) have taken to positively promote and impact the agriculture industry. Examples may include things such as hosting farm tours, legislative visits, writing a blog, etc.
A. Agriculture faces important issues at the local, state, national and international levels. Explain three important issues that the industry needs to address in the next five years. Choose one issue from three of the four levels mentioned above. For example, an applicant might select ag literacy as a local issue, mental health as a state issue and rural broadband as a national issue.
B. Choose one of the issues in your response to 4A and discuss how you personally have addressed, or can address, that issue and work towards a resolution.
5. **GOALS - Approximately 5,000 characters**

What goals does the applicant(s) have for the next five years related to his/her career, Farm Bureau involvement and involvement with other organizations? What steps have been made to reach these goals?
6. **LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (from age 18 to current)- Approximately 2,500 characters per section**

   Note: This applies to both applicants, if applying together. Please indicate A1 and A2 when applicable.

   A. List Farm Bureau leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers. Please include years of involvement. *Example: A1 – Elected President of the County Farm Bureau Board of Directors (2018-2019)*

   County Farm Bureau

   State/American Farm Bureau
6. LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE (continued) - Approximately 2,500 characters per section

B. List other agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers. (i.e., Farm Credit, Soil Conservation, Farm Service Agency, farm cooperatives, 4-H, etc.). Please include organization, description and years of involvement.
Example: A1 & A2 – 4-H, Serves as a 4-H Livestock Club Leader (2018 – present)

C. List other community and non-agricultural leadership roles, involvement opportunities, recognitions and/or awards received by the applicant(s), indicating service on committees, boards or as officers (i.e., civic/service clubs, church, school, volunteer leadership, etc.) Please include organization, description and years of involvement.
Example: A1 – Local Elementary School, Served as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) President (2018-2020)
If you had any situations or circumstances that may affect your leadership experiences, please use this space to explain. If you don’t have any situations or circumstances, please leave blank.

Approximately 250 characters

Note: There are no points associated to this section and can be left blank.